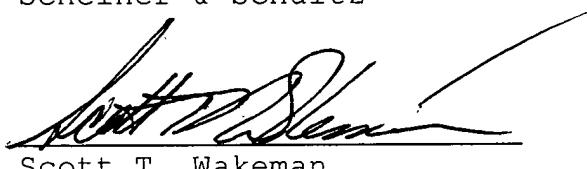


early indication of allowable subject matter. It is further indicated that claims 3-8 would be allowable if amended to include the limitations of their base claims. By the above amendment, Applicant has added the limitations of claims 1 and 2 to claims 3 and 7 and made claims 3 and 7 independent. Claims 1 and 2 have been canceled. In addition, claim 9 has been amended so that it depends from claim 3.

In view of the foregoing amendments, it is believed that claims 3-23 are now in condition for allowance. Wherefore, reconsideration of claims 3-9 and allowance of claims 3-23 is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,  
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